



*"Coordination of Indiana GIS through dissemination of data and data products, education and outreach, adoption of standards, and building partnerships"*

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### ***Background Information***

In December 1997, Christa Martin Jones of the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts called a meeting of various county, state, and federal agencies, as well as private companies known to have active GIS programs or interests. The goal of this meeting was to determine how funding could be generated to produce statewide digital orthophotography. The group that had assembled decided to continue meeting with a goal of implementing statewide GIS coordination. This effort became known as the Indiana Geographical Information Systems Initiative (INGISI).

In 1998, thirty-nine government, academic and industry representatives signed the *Indiana GIS Initiative Commitment to Success*, formally endorsing the broad principles of INGISI. Jill Saligoe-Simmel, PhD assumed the role of INGISI chair in January 1999. Funding for INGISI activities to date has been provided by a start-up grant from the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC), matching funds from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, and a GIS Metadata information and training grant, also from FGDC. The success of the organization has been enhanced by the willingness of many of its member organizations to donate staff time and resources to further the goals of the initiative.

### ***Current Status***

INGISI currently includes over 450 members from a diverse group of more than 150 organizations that span the full range of public and private GIS sectors at the Federal, State, and local levels. Organizationally, the INGISI Steering Committee is responsible for the coordination of INGISI activities. Six subcommittees are assigned various responsibilities that further the objectives of INGISI. Current subcommittees include:

Education	Networking	Data Sharing
Metadata	Standards	Web Development

Each subcommittee is chaired by a member of the Steering Committee and is responsible for reporting its progress during the quarterly Initiative meetings. INGISI has defined its objectives as the "Coordination of Indiana GIS through:

- Dissemination of data and data products
- Education and outreach
- Adoption of standards
- Building partnerships"

There are many examples of the significant progress that has already been made towards the realization of these objectives.

May 1, 2000



### **Dissemination of data and data products**

Following the current trend in GIS toward dissemination of data through the Internet, one of the many accomplishments of INGISI has been the ongoing development of its website. The goal for the website is to serve as a clearinghouse for GIS information. It contains INGISI meeting minutes, an online discussion forum, success stories of GIS implementation in Indiana, contacts for GIS expertise within government agencies and private industry, and serves as a starting point for finding GIS data and software (both free and commercial). As the organization matures, GIS data and metadata clearinghouses will be developed and expanded. This site is hosted by Access Indiana and is currently accessible at <http://www.state.in.us/ingisi>.

### **Education and outreach**

INGISI became a co-sponsor of the Indiana GIS Conference with the University GIS Alliance and the Indiana-Kentucky-Ohio Chapter of GITA International. The conference, held in March 2000, had over 400 participants, the best attendance in its history. One of the many benefits realized from this conference was the success of an INGISI sponsored survey that was conducted with the objective of identifying GIS needs and data resources in Indiana. This information will be used to further enhance the efforts of INGISI as it moves forward.

### **Adoption of standards**

A standards subcommittee has recently been formed with the objective of establishing a series of guidelines for GIS data development and maintenance that will be freely available when complete. It is anticipated that these guidelines will be of tremendous benefit both to those organizations in the early stages of GIS development and to those organizations that are further advanced in their GIS efforts.

### **Building partnerships**

The success of the INGISI effort is most apparent through the growing support for the Initiative from the many sectors across the state that utilize GIS. For example, within state government, the Data Processing Oversight Commission appointed Donise Stahl to investigate GIS coordination among state agencies. As part of the INGISI steering committee, she was helpful in keeping the coordination of state agencies and the Initiative's efforts consistent. She also helped establish a state agency GIS coordinator position utilizing existing funds. The state is currently advertising the position of Director for the new State Office of GIS. This person will serve as a member of the Indiana Geographic Council, and will provide administrative support to the group.

The Indiana GIS Initiative has been successful in encouraging a debate and meaningful discussion on how to implement statewide geographic information systems (GIS) coordination. Over the last year, the INGISI steering committee recognized the need to establish a formal body for statewide coordination, and provided a framework for the expectations of that body. That effort is culminating in the establishment of the Indiana Geographic Information Council, to be organized as a 501(c)3 not-for-profit entity.

Membership of the Indiana Geographic Information Council (the Council) is truly statewide – it promotes equity through representation by every major GIS sector in the state. The Council will be responsible for strategic planning, providing executive guidance for the developing statewide spatial data infrastructure, and facilitating the INGISI. The Council will be composed of 25 members, representing various interests. A proclamation by the Governor is anticipated recognizing the Council as the statewide GIS coordinating body for Indiana. The INGISI Steering Committee is currently evaluating candidates for the Indiana Geographic Information Council.

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